

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 03151 310018Z

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9471

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 03151

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:PINT,BE

SUBJECT: PUBLIC OPINION POLL INDICATES EXCEPTIONAL MOBILITY AMONG
FRANCOPHONE VOTERS

REF: BRUSSELS 2678

1.THE CATHOLIC LABOR DAILY,LA CITE,PUBLISHED MARCH 30 RESULTS OF
A PRE-ELECTION POLL WHICH SIGNALS EXCEPTIONAL MOBILITY AMONG
FRANCOPHONE VOTERS IN BRUSSELS AND WALLONIA.

2.THE NEWSPAPER ASKED A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLING OF VOTERS IN THOSE
AREAS: " DO YOU INTEND TO VOTE THE SAME WAY YOU DID IN THE LAST
LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS?" TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT REPLIED THAT THEY IN-
TENDED TO CHANGE THEIR VOTE - A PROPORTION DISTINCTLY ABOVE THE NORM
IN RECENT ELECTIONS.SIXTY-EIGHT PERCENT SAID THAT THEY PLANNED NO
CHANGE,AND THE REST WERE UNDECIDED.THE CATEGORIES OF VOTERS MOST
INCLINED TO CHANGE WERE THE UNEMPLOYED (35 PERCENT)AND TEACHERS
(45 PERCENT),FOLLOWED BY BLUE-COLLAR WORKERS. AT THE OTHER END
OF TH SPECTRUM WERE HOUSEWIVES AND PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE,OF WHOM
ONLY 15 PERCENT VOTE DIFFERENTLY FROM LAST TIME.

3.LA CITE SAID THE RESULTS OF ITS POLL INDICATED THAT THERE COULD
BE SOME MAJOR SURPRISES IN THE APRIL 17 ELECTIONS -
AND SOME SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL REALIGNMENTS IN BRUSSELS AND WALLONIA.

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4.COMMENT: THE WALLOON LINGUISTIC PARTY RASSEMBLEMENT WALLON
HANVING SPLIT INTO TWO SINCE THE 1974 ELECTIONS,SOME CHANGE IN
VOTER ALLEGIANCE IN WALLONIA IS INEVITABLE.LIKEWISE,SOME SHIFT
OF BRUSSELS VOTES TO THE CAPITAL'S LINGUISTIC PARTY,THE FRANCOPHONE
DEMOCRATIC FRONT,IS ALL BUT CERTAIN GIVEN FDF'S SUBSTANTIAL UPSURGE
IN LAST AUTOMN'S MINICIPAL ELECTIONS.BUT THE APPARENT RESTLESSNESS

WITHIN GROUP OF VOTERS HARDEST HIT BY THE RECENT RECESSION IS
HARDER TO INTERPRET.MANY MAY BE CHRISTIAN OR LIBERAL PARTY VOTERS
THINKING OF MOVING LEFT.BUT ARE SOME OF THE UNEMPLOYED AND
BLUE-COLLAR WORKERS,NORMALLY SOCIALIST VOTERS,NOW TENDING TO
TURN CAUTIOUS AND CONSERVATIVE? IT HAS HAPPENED BEFORE DURING HARD
TIMES IN BELGIUM.
RENNER

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